

Application Serial No.: 10/529,320
Amdt. dated October 12, 2006
Reply to Non-Final Office Action of July 21, 2006

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action dated July 21, 2006 and the reference cited therein have been carefully considered. In response to the Office Action, Applicant has canceled Claim 2, amended Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 18 and 20 and added new Claim 21 which, when considered with the remarks set forth below, are deemed to place the case with Claims 1 and 3-21 in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner states that the phrase "such as" in Claim 1 renders the claim indefinite. In response, Applicant has amended Claim 1 to delete the phrase "such as." Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the §112 rejection to the claims has been overcome.

Also in the Office Action, Claim 4 has been deemed allowable. In response, Applicant has rewritten Claim 4 in independent form including all of the limitations of Claims 1-3. Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 4 should now be allowed.

Further in the Office Action, Claims 1-2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,164,141 to Chavignac and Claims 3 and 5-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Chavignac patent. Specifically, the Examiner states that the Chavignac patent teaches a connector for connecting a fluid line to a fluid technology device having a volume fluid technology device comprising pressure drop generation means provided in a connection channel of the connector wherein a mass flow sensor device is further provided on or in the connector.

In response, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1, rewrote Claims 18 and 20 in independent form and added new independent Claim 21. The patentability of each of the pending independent Claims 1, 18, 20 and 21 is discussed below.

Claim 1

Applicant has amended Claim 1 to more clearly define a connector including a main housing and a volume flow detection device incorporated together with the main housing. It

is respectfully submitted that the Chalvignac patent does not disclose a volume flow detection device incorporated together with a main housing of a fluid connector, as defined in amended Claim 1.

In particular, the Chalvignac patent merely discloses a fluid connector which is “intended to be connected to a pressure sensor (not shown).” (Column 3, lines 17-18.) Thus, the connector itself does not include a pressure sensor incorporated therein, as defined in amended Claim 1. Instead the connector disclosed in the Chalvignac patent has two pressure pick-up conduits (26 and 28), which open into the internal flow channel (20) of the connector, and which are adapted to be connected to a separate external pressure sensor. The pressure sensor is not incorporated with the housing, as defined in Claim 1. Indeed the pressure sensor is not even shown in the Chalvignac patent. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 18

Applicant has rewritten Claim 18 in independent form. Claim 18 is similar to Claim 1 in its definition of a housing equipped with a volume flow detection device. Claim 18, however, further defines the arrangement of the housing and the position of the volume flow detection device within the housing. Specifically, Claim 18 defines a housing in the shape of an elbow and having connections oriented at an angle to one another, wherein the mass flow sensor device of the volume flow detection device is positioned on the side diametrically opposite the line connection.

As a result of the invention of Claim 18, a fluid connector having very small dimensions in the height direction is provided. This is due to the mass flow sensor being positioned diametrically opposite to the line connection (i.e., in about the same plane as the line connection). Such features are clearly not shown in the prior art.

Specifically, as explained above with respect to Claim 1, the Chalvignac patent does not disclose a volume flow detection device incorporated together with a main housing of a fluid connector. Moreover, the Chalvignac patent does not disclose an elbow shaped

connector having connections oriented at an angle to one another, wherein the mass flow sensor device of the volume flow detection device is positioned on the side diametrically opposite the line connection, as set forth in Claim 18. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 18 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 20

Applicant has rewritten Claim 20 in independent form. Claim 20 also defines a connector housing equipped with a volume flow detection device. Claim 20, however, includes the further limitation of an additional temperature detection means for detecting the fluid temperature existing in the connection channel of the connector. The invention of Claim 20 provides the added feature of detecting the temperature of the fluid flowing through the connection channel and to use the measured temperature data for other diagnostic purposes.

It is respectfully submitted that the Chavignac patent does not disclose a fluid connector equipped with both a volume flow detection device and an additional temperature detection means, as set forth in Claim 20. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 20 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 21

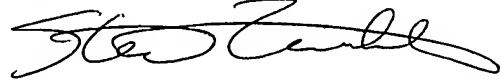
Applicant has also added new Claim 21. Claim 21 defines a connector including a main housing, a pressure drop generator disposed within a connection channel of the main housing and a mass flow sensor device contained within the main housing. It is respectfully submitted that the Chavignac patent does not disclose a fluid connector having a mass flow detection device contained within a main housing of a fluid connector, as set forth in Claim 21. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 21 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Therefore, for all of the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 18, 20 and 21 and the claims that depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over the prior art.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, favorable consideration and allowance of the application with Claims 1 and 3-21 are respectfully solicited. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would assist in moving the application toward allowance, he is respectfully invited to contact the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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